57. Desirability of setting apart every year a portion of the revenue of the taluk for improving agriculture and the means of communication in the taluk.

Mr. E. Narayanan Oonnithan (Member, Kartigapalli taluk) explained the importance of the taluk in point of area, population, density, &c., and gave figures in regard to the area under cultivation, and other kindred matters. He then stated that at one time the taluk was self-contained in the matter of food-production, but that it was not so now on account of increase of population and other causes. There were not sufficient facilities for agricultural improvement. The want of roads was a matter which they had been urging for the past 16 years at the Assembly. The most urgent road the construction of which was agreed to at the P. W. Conference of 1089 was the one from Trikkunnappuzha to Haripad. Though 6 years had elapsed, nothing had been done. Though a sum of about Rs. 3 lakhs was being realised from the taluk as revenue, the condition of the means of communication in the taluk was most deplorable. It was highly necessary that a certain portion of the revenue of the taluk should be ear-marked every year for public works in the taluk. There were several tanks, channels, canals, &c., which should be improved or restored, so as to make them useful for cultivation. It might not be possible to execute all the works at once, but a definite programme might be prepared and the necessary works carried out in instalments. The co-operation of the people might be invited, and if the Dewan Peishkar were to make earnest endeavours, there would be no difficulty in securing substantial support from the people.

Dewan's reply.—Noted. The attention of the Dewan Peishkar will be invited to the representation of the Member.

58. Agricultural needs of the Vaikom taluk.

Mr. Varki John (Member, Vaikom taluk) pleaded for greater conveniences being afforded for carrying on agricultural operations, such as grazing grounds, improved implements, &c. He then submitted that the ryots were suffering much on account of their cattle being subject to diseases and requested that a Veterinary Dispensary might be opened at Vaikom. The nearest Veterinary Dispensary was either at Kottayam or at Alleppey, about 24 miles away. The other requests of the Member were :—(1) opening of model demonstration farms, (2) granting of agricultural loans, and (3) improvement of (*a*) Kanian *thodu* (*b*) Kannadi or Tholupra *thodu* (*c*) Muzhikal *thodu* and (*d*) Palliprom *thodu*.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

59. Need for opening Agricultural Boards in Ambalapuzha to settle disputes between *punja* cultivators.

Mr. Ousep Kochu Ousep (Member, Ambalapuzha taluk) drew the attention of Government to the hardships of *punja* cultivators. The putting up of bunds (*Varampus*) was the first important step. *Punja* lands were cultivated in blocks varying from 2,000 to 10,000 *paras* in extent and such cultivation was the conjoint effort of several ryots. If one ryot did not take steps to put his bund in order, that was sufficient to cause damage to the other portions. When complaints were made to higher authorities about the failure of a ryot to carry out his portion of the bund, no one listened to them. If, out of a desire to guard one's own interest, one were to put up the bund which one's neighbour ought to do, it was impossible to realize the cost even through a court of law. The next step in *punja* cultivation was the draining of water. That too was now done conjointly, as the pumping of water was costly. Here also the same difficulties were being experienced and the files in the Alleppey Munsiffs' Courts would bear testimony to the large volume of litigation on the subject. The third difficulty was in regard to labour. It was the practice to make advances to labourers in the shape of money and paddy under a contract. But the terms of such contract were being often violated, as the labourers were not available at the time when their services were required. To remedy the three-fold defects pointed out above and to attend to other agricultural matters Agricultural Boards should be created, composed of capable and experienced ryots. A law should first be passed and the Boards constituted under it.

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